

## INFORMATION SHEET 4

### QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF CATS AND DOGS FROM APPROVED COUNTRIES IN WHICH RABIES IS ABSENT OR WELL CONTROLLED

#### MINIMUM 30 DAYS QUARANTINE IN AUSTRALIA

Further advice can be found at [www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au) or by e-mail at [animalimp@aqis.gov.au](mailto:animalimp@aqis.gov.au) or by  
ph +612 6272 4454 or by fax +612 6272 3110

#### SUMMARY

All animals entering Australia require an import permit, issued by AQIS. To obtain an import permit, an [application to import](#) your pet must be completed and returned to the [quarantine station](#) of your choice. Your application must include your pet's microchip number. An import permit will be returned to you. The import permit contains Veterinary Certificate A and B which must be completed and endorsed by an Official Veterinarian in the country of export prior to the arrival of your pet in Australia. The steps below provide information for completing the entire import process.

The owner/importer must pay all [quarantine fees](#) associated with the import and quarantine accommodation of your dog or cat in Australia

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Updated January 2004

*check once  
completed*

#### STEP 1: GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

**Time Frame:** Confirm eligibility before proceeding.

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**Residency:** Dogs and cats must have been continuously living in the country of export for a minimum of 6 months immediately prior to shipment, or since direct importation from Australia (please see the section on last page before proceeding).

Your pet must not have been under quarantine restrictions in the 30 days prior to export.

AQIS will allow the importation of dogs and cats from the European Union that have not completed 6 months residency in the country of export. The animal(s) must however have been continuously resident for the 6 months prior to export in AQIS approved European Union countries. Documentation to support residency status must be provided to the Official Veterinarian endorsing Veterinary Certificates A and B.

**Age:** Animals must be more than 6 months old at time of export.

**Pregnancy:** Animals must not be more than 6 weeks pregnant, nor be suckling young at time of export.

**Breeds:** Under the legislation of the Australian Customs Service (ACS) dogs of the following breeds are not eligible for importation into Australia. The ACS can be contacted on 61 2 6245 5484 or 1300 363 263

- dogo Argentino
- fila Brasileiro
- Japanese tosa
- Pit bull terrier or American pit bull

Under the legislation of Environment Australia domestic/non-domestic animal hybrids eg bengal cats or wolf crosses are not eligible for import, unless they are proven to be 5<sup>th</sup> generation or more away from any pure-bred non-domestic ancestor. Please contact Wildlife Permits and Enforcement Section, The Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage on 02 6274 1111 for further information.

## **STEP 2: MICROCHIP CAT OR DOG**

**Time Frame:** Before collecting blood for the rabies antibody test.



Dogs and cats must be identified by a microchip that can be read by an Avid®, Trovan®, Destron® or other ISO compatible reader. The microchip must be implanted before any testing takes place.

## **STEP 3: CHECK RABIES VACCINATION**

**Time Frame:** Within 1 year of export.

### **N.B. CATS AND DOGS**



Arrange for your pet to be vaccinated/ revaccinated with an approved inactivated rabies vaccine according to **a** or **b**.

**a) Primovaccination** The animal must be at least 3 months old at the time of the first vaccination. The vaccination must be given between 12 months and 90 days prior to export.

**b) Subsequent Vaccinations** Where the primovaccination or subsequent vaccinations were given more than 12 months prior to the date of export a booster vaccination must be given. This booster must be given within 12 months prior to export.

The primovaccination certificate, or the most current rabies vaccination booster certificate must be presented to the Official Veterinarian when completing Section 7 of the application form for an AQIS import permit.

## **STEP 4: FIND A GOVERNMENT APPROVED VETERINARIAN, AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND A GOVERNMENT APPROVED LABORATORY.**

**Time frame:** Before collecting blood for the rabies antibody test.



**An Official Veterinarian:** is a government officer usually employed by the government veterinarian administration (eg United States Department of Agriculture) in the exporting country. Official Veterinarians generally do not work in private practice. Official Veterinarians are able to sign certificates on behalf of the government's veterinary administration. Official Vets endorse Veterinary Certificate A and complete Veterinary Certificate B that are provided with your AQIS import permit. The Official Veterinarian must also complete, sign and stamp Section 7 of your application form before it can be forwarded

to AQIS. The Official Veterinarian will also help you find a “government approved vet” and a “government approved laboratory”.

**Government approved vet:** You should call the Official Vet, or quarantine administration or veterinary administration in your country to determine which vets you can use to prepare your pet for export. This veterinarian will prepare your pet for export to Australia and fill in the details of this preparation on Veterinary Certificate A provided with your AQIS import permit.

**Government approved laboratories:** are approved by the government veterinary service for testing samples from animals destined for export. AQIS allows the use of Government approved laboratories in countries other than the country of export. If you wish, the [Australian Animal Health Laboratory](#) (AAHL) can do all testing for you. Fax: 613 5227 5555

Ph: 613 5227 5329

To locate appropriate veterinarians and laboratories, contact the government quarantine, agriculture or food departments in the country of export. Alternatively, contact AQIS.

#### STEP 5: RABIES NEUTRALISING ANTIBODY TITRE TEST (RNATT)



**Time frame:** Between 60 days and 12 months prior to export.

**Note:** As this test measures your pet’s antibody response to the rabies vaccination it should be done at least 4 weeks after the rabies vaccination. This enables your pet to produce sufficient antibodies to record a positive result.

The date that the blood is drawn for the RNATT will determine the amount of time your pet must stay in quarantine in Australia. **One hundred and eighty (180) days must elapse between the date that the blood was taken for the RNAT test (with a satisfactory result) and the date your pet is released from quarantine in Australia.** Keep in mind that your pet must spend at least 30 days in a quarantine kennel in Australia regardless of when the blood was taken for the RNATT test. This means that if you want your pet to be quarantined in Australia for the minimum amount of time of 30 days then blood for the RNAT test must be taken at least 150 days prior to the export of your pet.

<u>Collection of sample for RNATT</u>	<u>Minimum quarantine period</u>
150 days or more prior to arrival in Australia	30 days
135 days prior to arrival in Australia	45 days
120 days prior to arrival in Australia	60 days
90 days prior to arrival in Australia	90 days
65 days prior to arrival in Australia	115 days

Arrange for a government approved veterinarian to scan your pet’s microchip and draw a blood sample for the RNATT. Your pet’s microchip number must be written on the blood tube and on the laboratory submission form.

A government-approved laboratory must carry out testing. The laboratory report must include your pet’s microchip number and a result of at least 0.5 IU/ml. If a result of less than 0.5 IU/ml is obtained you must re-vaccinate your pet and repeat the process.

The RNATT report must be presented to an Official Veterinarian when completing Section 7 of the AQIS application form for an import permit and be forwarded with your application to Australia.

The RNATT is only valid for 1 year from the date of blood collection. If you need to repeat your pet's RNATT you must re-test within a year of the initial RNATT to demonstrate continuous protection against rabies and to avoid another lengthy wait before being eligible for entry into Australia.

#### **STEP 6: APPLY FOR A PERMIT TO IMPORT**



**Time frame:** After you have the RNATT laboratory report.

**Note:** The AQIS import permits are only valid for 6 months from the day that AQIS receives your application.

Fill out the application form and send it to the Australian quarantine station that you want to accommodate your pet. An Official Vet will have to complete, sign and stamp Section 7 (rabies) of the application form.

Your pet will not be allowed to enter Australia without a valid AQIS permit to import.

#### **STEP 7: AQIS PERMIT TO IMPORT**



**Time Frame:** An AQIS import permit will be sent to you immediately following approval by AQIS of your application. You may request the import permit to be faxed; a copy of the import permit may be used.

A permit will be sent to the person/company that you nominate as the “exporter” on your application form.

The permit includes **Veterinary Certificates A and B**. This information sheet will take you through the steps required to complete these veterinary certificates. You may continue to prepare your pet/s for export before the AQIS import permit and veterinary certificates arrive.

#### **STEP 8: COMMENCE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**



**Time frame:** As soon as you have received the import permit from AQIS.

Your pet can only come into Australia through the following airports, Kingsford Smith Airport in Sydney (New South Wales), **or** Tullamarine Airport in Melbourne (Victoria), **or** Perth Airport in Perth (Western Australia).

AQIS does not place any restrictions on the airline you choose to use, however, your pet must travel as “Manifested Cargo” (not in the cabin) and in an International Air Transport Association (IATA) approved container for dogs and cats. Strict compliance with container specifications is vital for the safe and secure transport of your animal. Problems **will occur** if your pet can escape from this container or if any part of its body (nose, limbs, or tail) can protrude. Your airline can help you with these requirements.

During transport to Australia pets may transit (stay on the same plane) or trans-ship (change planes) in all countries (AQIS approved or not), however the original seals on the cages must not be broken. Trans-shipment may also require approval from the quarantine authority in the country of trans-shipment. AQIS strongly advises booking direct flights due to health and welfare concerns, eg pets missing connecting flights and remaining in airports for extended periods.

If you are not able to organise travel yourself there are animal transport agents in most countries who can make arrangements on your behalf.

Please note you will be charged an additional fee of \$25 if your pet arrives in Australia outside business hours (8:00am - 4:00 pm). You are also required to seek the approval of the relevant quarantine station for after hours' pick-ups, from the airport, prior to import.

AQIS accepts no responsibility for animals that escape on route, and all transport costs are at the expense of the importer.



#### **STEP 9: GENERAL VACCINATIONS**

**Time frame:** Between 12 months and 14 days prior to export.

Vaccinations must be valid for the entire period spent in quarantine in Australia. If vaccinations expire prior to your pet's release from quarantine they may be re-vaccinated at the owner's expense.

**Dogs** must be vaccinated against distemper, infectious hepatitis, canine parvovirus (parvo), para-influenza and *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (kennel cough). Dogs may be vaccinated for kennel cough on arrival in Australia at the owner's expense.

**Note:** Vaccinations against *Leptospira interrogans*.var. *canicola* is not recommended within 6 months of export as your pet's high antibody response will most likely result in it being ineligible for export to Australia.

**Cats** must have been vaccinated against feline enteritis (feline panleucopenia, feline distemper), rhinotracheitis and calicivirus.

#### **STEP 10: ADDITIONAL TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR DOGS AND CATS FROM MALAYSIA ONLY**

**Time frame:** Within 45 days prior to export.



All dogs and cats from Malaysia must be tested for Nipah virus by the Serum Neutralisation test at Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL), Victoria, Fax: 613 5227 5555 Ph: 613 5227 5329, on a blood sample collected within 45 days prior to export, with negative results.

Please retain this laboratory report.

#### **STEP 11: DOGS ONLY - BRUCELLOSIS, EHRLICHIOSIS, LEPTOSPIROSIS AND EXTERNAL PARASITES**

**Time frame:** Within 30 days of export.



**Blood tests:** Arrange for a government approved veterinarian to scan your dog's microchip and draw blood samples for brucella and ehrlichia (tropical canine pancytopenia) and leptospira. Your dog's microchip number must be recorded on the blood tube and on laboratory submission form. Send blood to a government-approved laboratory for testing. The laboratory report must link your pets' microchip number to the result.

These results must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A. All laboratory test results must be endorsed by an Official Veterinarian and accompany your pet to Australia. Contact AQIS if your dog does not meet the requirements of these tests.

**Brucellosis:** Your dog/s must be tested for *Brucella canis* infection by a serum agglutination test. The test must produce a negative result (less than 50% agglutination at serum dilution of 1:100). Once blood is collected for this test your dog must not be mated or inseminated prior to export to Australia.

**Leptospirosis:** Dogs must be tested for *Leptospira canicola* by a microscopic agglutination test within 30 days of export.

Dogs that record a negative result (less than 50% agglutination at a serum dilution of 1:100) are eligible for import.

Dogs that record a positive result of not more than 1:400 must be **re-tested** 14 days or more after the first test. The second test must not show an increase in titre above the first test.

Dogs that record a result of over 1:400 are ineligible for import.

**Ehrlichiosis:** Your dog/s must be tested for *Ehrlichia canis* infection by the indirect fluorescent antibody test. The test must produce a negative result at a dilution at 1:40. Your pet must be treated for external parasites within 24 hours of blood being taken for this test.

#### **Treatment for external parasites**

**Note:** You will have to commence treating your pet/s for external parasites at the same time as taking blood for ehrlichia as this disease is spread by ticks.

A government approved veterinarian must treat your dog with a long lasting acaricide that is registered for the control of ticks and mites eg Frontline® or Permethrin®. Oral products and medicated collars are not satisfactory, neither are products that kill ticks only after biting your animal. Washes and rinses that prevent ticks and tick bites are acceptable. The treatment must be **repeated** according to the manufacturer's instructions in order to prevent infestation with ticks and mites from the first application until export.

Dates of treatment will need to be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

***Dogs which have  
lived in Africa only***

#### **STEP 12: DOGS THAT HAVE LIVED IN AFRICA ONLY - BABESIOSIS**



**Time frame:** within 28 days of export.

**Note:** This treatment should not be given within 48 hours of treatment for external parasites as side-effects may be increased.

**Option 1:** A government approved veterinarian must treat your dog once with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65®, Hoechst or Imizol® by Coopers) at a rate of 7.5 mg per Kg body weight by subcutaneous injection.

**Option 2:** A government approved veterinarian must treat your dog twice with imidocarb dipropionate (Forray-65®, Hoechst or Imizol® by Coopers) at a rate of 6.6 mg per Kg body weight by subcutaneous injection given two weeks apart.

Details of both treatments must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

### STEP 13: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PARASITE TREATMENT



**Time frame:** Within 4 days of export. This can be done at the same time as the completion of Veterinary Certificate A.

**External parasites:** You must have already commenced external parasite treatment for dogs. Your dog/s may require repeat treatment for external parasites and will need to be treated for fleas. Cats must be treated with a product approved for the treatment of ticks and fleas. Oral products, injections and medicated collars are not satisfactory neither are products that rely on the tick biting your pet. Washes and rinses that prevent ticks and tick bites are acceptable.

The active ingredient, dose rate and treatment date must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

**Internal parasites:** Cats and/or dogs must be treated with a product approved for the treatment of nematodes and cestodes eg Drontal ®.

The active ingredient, dose rate and treatment date must be recorded on Veterinary Certificate A.

### STEP 14: COMPLETION OF VETERINARY CERTIFICATE A, INCLUDING PRE-EXPORT INSPECTION



**Time frame:** Within 4 days of the export

Please read over Veterinary Certificate A prior to the appointment. You will have to bring your pet/s and all documentation to this inspection. Your pet will be required to be free from clinical signs of infectious or contagious diseases, external parasites and be fit to travel.

Veterinary Certificate A is to be completed by a government approved or an Official Veterinarian.

Any corrections to Veterinary Certificate A will only be accepted if the original entry has been struck through and remains legible – white out must not be used. An Official Veterinarian must sign each correction.

### STEP 15: COMPLETION OF VETERINARY CERTIFICATE B, SEALING ANIMAL IN THE SHIPPING CONTAINER



**Time frame:** After the completion of Veterinary Certificate A, usually on the day of departure.

The following documents must be presented to the Official Veterinarian at this time for signature and stamp (endorsing) and then travel with your pet/s to Australia.

- Original or copy of the AQIS import permit
- Completed Veterinary Certificate A for endorsement by Official Veterinarian.
- Veterinary Certificate B for completion and endorsement by the Official Veterinarian
- General vaccination certificates for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- Rabies vaccination certificate for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- RNATT for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian.
- Brucellosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Leptospirosis laboratory reports (dogs only) for endorsement by the Official Veterinarian

Copies may be used but the paperwork arriving in Australia with your pet must bear original signatures and stamps.

The Official Veterinarian who signs Veterinary Certificate B must record the identification number of the seal on Veterinary Certificate B, and seal your pet into the cage. Under no circumstances must your pet be released from its cage once sealed. Ensure your pet is prepared for travel before the cage is sealed.

A water container should be fixed inside the cage. An external funnel with a hose leading into the water container should be provided to allow water to be replenished without opening the cage. Sufficient absorbent bedding should also be provided (soiled bedding may be destroyed on arrival in Australia). The container should also be marked "Live Animal".

Corrections to Veterinary Certificate B will only be accepted if the original entry has been struck through and remains legible – white out must not be used. The Official Veterinarian must sign each correction.



## **STEP 16 CHECK PET IN WITH THE AIRLINE**

**Time frame:** Please check with your airline.

In most cases your pet/s will be checked in at the freight terminal, not the passenger terminal.

**The import permit, Veterinary Certificates A and B, blood test results and vaccination records must travel to Australia with your pet/s. These documents may be originals or copies but must bear the original signature and stamp of the Official Veterinarian.**

Please make photocopies of all documents. AQIS recommends taping one set of photocopied documents onto the cage while keeping another set with you.

If, in exceptional circumstances, your pet's container must be opened during transit or transshipment it should be resealed and a certificate provided to AQIS by an Official Veterinarian, port authority, or captain of the aircraft detailing the circumstances. Instructions to this effect should be attached to the outside of the container before departure from the port of export.

## **ON ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA**

On arrival your pet will be met by AQIS staff and transported to the quarantine station. AQIS provide housing, bedding, food, water and care for your pet for the duration of its stay. All quarantine costs must be met by the importer, an invoice for these charges will be posted to you after arrival of your pet in Australia and must be paid prior to release of your pet (cheques take 2 weeks to clear).

Should your pet require veterinary care, AQIS will contact you and arrange for a private veterinarian to visit your pet. The private veterinarian will charge you directly.

## **HEARTWORM - Dogs**

Please note that heartworm disease of dogs is endemic in Australia. Heartworm is caused by the microorganism *Dirofilaria immitis* and is spread by mosquitoes. No testing or treatment is required for importation into Australia, however drugs are available on arrival to prevent heartworm. If you would like your dog to be placed on heartworm medication please contact the quarantine station that will accommodate your dog. The private veterinarian will bill you separately for this service.



## **DOGS AND CATS RETURNING TO AUSTRALIA AFTER LESS THAN 6 MONTHS RESIDENCY IN COUNTRY OF EXPORT**

Australian dogs and cats may be eligible to return to Australia with less than 6 months residency in the country of export, provided the animal has resided continuously in the country since being imported directly from Australia. This concession allows the animals to undergo the minimum period of post-entry quarantine (30 days) on return to Australia. To be eligible the following conditions must be met prior to leaving Australia.

- Your pet must be microchipped with an ISO approved chip, and
- An AQIS accredited veterinarian must vaccinate your pet/s against rabies and 4 weeks later,
- An AQIS accredited veterinarian must collect and send a blood sample to the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) for a rabies neutralising antibody titre test (RNATT).
- The RNATT report from AAHL must record your pet's microchip number and a result of greater than 0.5 IU/ml. This laboratory report should be signed and stamped by AQIS prior to the export of your pet/s.

All other import requirements must be met.